

VZCZCXRO7674
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHKUK
DE RUEHMO #4897/01 2780957
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 050957Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4429
INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 MOSCOW 004897

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/04/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [EAID](#) [MASS](#) [ETTC](#) [RU](#) [SY](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: RUSSIAN DFM KISLYAK: IRAN, MD, CFE, ARMS
TRANSFERS, ELECTION ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 137954

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Burns: 1.4 (b, d).

11. (C) Summary: In an October 4 meeting with the Ambassador, DFM Kislyak staked out familiar positions on missile defense, arguing that U.S. insistence on radar and interceptor facilities in the Czech Republic and Poland meant the 2 2 delegations would "talk past each other" and accusing the U.S. of using negotiations to "soothe" Europe. He rejected alleged U.S. "threats" to retaliate against a potential Russian moratorium on CFE and expected Duma approval in November for Putin's strategy of "freezing" the treaty. While Putin would insist that Iran halt its enrichment program during his October 16 Tehran visit, Kislyak did not rule out progress on the Bushehr payments issue. Kislyak re-affirmed that if Iran paid cash and adhered to full scope safeguards, Bushehr could move forward and ruled out the need for additional nonproliferation measures at the facility. Referring to talks with acting U/S Rood, Kislyak reiterated there was no cooperation with Iran by Russian entities and emphasized that Russia "cut it off." In response to grave U.S. concerns over Russian arms transfers, including RPG-29's to Syria, Kislyak questioned their origin, said Russia would investigate, and requested additional information. Flagging a media attack on U.S. electoral assistance, the Ambassador stressed the Embassy's readiness to brief any concerned Russian agency on the scope of our programs. End Summary

Missile Defense: Approaching 2 2

12. (C) In an October 4 meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Kislyak, the Ambassador encouraged Russia to use the upcoming 2 2 visit of Secretary Rice and Secretary Gates to frame what could be accomplished in the remaining period of Putin's tenure as President, and to push forward initiatives in the areas of civilian nuclear energy, the stewardship of our nuclear arsenals, and missile defense cooperation. The U.S. delegation would approach the discussions in the spirit set by the Presidents at Kennebunkport and continued to see Putin's offer of missile defense cooperation in strategic terms. The Ambassador expressed concern, however, that despite successive discussions on missile defense and a positive exchange of information at the Qabala radar facility, the extent of possible Russian cooperation still remained unclear. While the U.S. had heard Russian dissatisfaction over the placement of radar and interceptors in the Czech Republic and Poland, what was missing was Russia's strategic vision of the potential for U.S. and Russian cooperation.

13. (C) Kislyak responded in familiar terms. Putin's initiative was premised on a halt to the development of the "third site" in Europe, since Russia would not actively cooperate in sabotaging its own national interests. The more

the Russians engaged, Kislyak complained, the more frequently GOR officials heard that the Czech and Polish sites were nonnegotiable. Even as the visit was underway in Qabala, Kislyak stressed, LTG Obering dismissed the site publicly as unsuitable for American needs. The Russian General Staff was responding to frequent American statements that Russia could only be an addition to -- and not a substitute for -- existing U.S. plans. The Ambassador responded that the General Staff had contributed more than their share of unhelpful statements on U.S. intentions and the security of European allies. Kislyak insisted that Russian military angst stemmed from an analytical assessment that the European sites filled a gap in global U.S. coverage that would ultimately, even unexpectedly, be directed against Russia. While the GOR understood the rationale behind the American arguments on the technological gaps bridged by X-band radar, it also judged that the radar facilitated the tracking of Russian missiles. Russia would not provide the U.S. with "stereo coverage" of its territory.

14. (C) To date, Kislyak concluded, the American and Russian delegations had talked past one another. There was no "rapprochement" in positions; the U.S. used negotiations to pacify the GOR and to soothe the Czechs and Poles. Russia had warned both countries that they enjoyed the sovereign right to choose to cooperate with the United States on missile defense, while the GOR retained the sovereign right to respond. "There should be no surprises." Russia did not want a discussion that led nowhere or that served as a cover for expansive American designs. "Either we wQhonestly, or not at all." Kislyak reiterated that the Iranian threat remained years in the offing and that there was time to explore the Russian offer seriously. Touting Qabala, Kislyak stressed that while the technology was dated, the facility

MOSCOW 00004897 002 OF 004

was reliable and powerful. Kislyak repeated the analysis of Russian experts that there was no realistic way for the Iranians to utilize North Korean technology: it was too difficult, even too difficult for the Russians to do accurately, which is why the GOR had shifted designs, and Tehran simply did not have the industrial base or resources to make this effort.

CFE: Bridling at American "Threats"

15. (C) Based on a readout from MFA Disarmament Director Antonov, Kislyak said he was "very disappointed" by the Berlin CFE seminar and what he termed American "threats" to retaliate through NATO against a potential Russian moratorium. Noting that he would ratify the A/CFE immediately, if we were a NATO country, and then take up the issue of flank limits, Kislyak said the "lingering problems" were getting more difficult every day. NATO had decided to let Georgia and Moldova use the treaty as leverage against Russia, which was a mistake. Russia, he repeated, would "freeze" the treaty. Kislyak warned the Ambassador that anyone who doubted Russia's resolve would soon be mistaken. Russia was not posturing, and not seeking to blackmail Europe. Rather than serve as a forum for rational discussion, Berlin had produced a series of ultimatums. While the GOR was told to take the American paper "or else," the Russians had tabled their own proposal and had every right to expect it to be the basis for discussion. Kislyak highlighted the lack of clarity and absence of firm guarantees in the parallel plan and said that Russia did not trust the U.S. to deliver, given a record of disappointment, including on Jackson-Vanik. The Ambassador told Kislyak not to conflate CFE with other negotiations, especially WTO, on which the U.S. was bending over backwards to help Russia. (Kislyak conceded that point, grudgingly.) The Ambassador added that the U.S. did not doubt the seriousness of Russia's position on CFE, and defended the parallel action plan as detailed and credible, addressing both sides' concerns.

¶16. (C) Unmoved, Kislyak sketched out a timeline whereby Putin's decision to "freeze" the treaty would be ratified by the Duma. Following his initial testimony to the Duma on September 19, Kislyak said he would testify again in a few weeks, and by early November expected a vote in parliament approving Putin's course of action.

Iran: Bushehr and Putin's Caspian Sea Visit

¶17. (C) The Ambassador stressed the importance of maintaining a two-track approach to Iran and the concern generated by Putin's October 16 visit to Tehran for the Caspian Sea Summit. Kislyak replied that the U.S. could "rest assured" that Putin will call strongly for a freeze to the Iranian enrichment program, and pointed to the good exchange between Putin and the President on this topic at the APEC Summit. When pressed by the Ambassador on whether there were any "imminent" developments on Bushehr to be expected, Kislyak allowed that the reactor had its "own dimension" of discussion. The Russian decision to complete Bushehr had been made previously, it was a technical and economic question as to when that would occur. The Russian position was "cash on the barrel head," and Kislyak pointed to a series of Iranian mis-steps that had produced construction delays and the drawdown of Russian workers. However, Russia and Iran were "almost in agreement" on resolving these bottlenecks and Kislyak did not rule out that progress on the payment dispute could be announced by October 16, although actual completion of the project would still be some time off.

¶18. (C) Kislyak underscored that Putin would not focus on Bushehr, but that the Russians had consistently said that if the Iranians paid their bills and adhered to full scope IAEA safeguards, with the return of the fuel to Russia for reprocessing, the project would move forward. The Ambassador underscored that the timing of the Bushehr announcement would be interpreted as a diplomatic win by the Ahmadinejad regime, and pushed the GOR to focus on additional measures (reftel) that could be taken to reaffirm our nonproliferation goals, such as remote monitoring and the negotiation of additional IC-66 safeguards. Kislyak replied that Russia would, as per standard practice, rely upon the IAEA to determine the appropriate mix of measures to monitor the Bushehr facility. Kislyak dismissed a separate IC-66 as inapplicable, given Iran's membership in the NPT and adherence to full scope safeguards. If Iran were to pull out of the NPT, Kislyak argued that Iran would still need to maintain safeguards at Bushehr; if the regime did not, it would run out of fuel within a year and was technologically unable to produce replacement fuel rods. Kislyak concluded that it was

MOSCOW 00004897 003 OF 004

unlikely that Western firms would step up and supply replacements.

¶19. (S) The Ambassador underscored the importance of the Russian track record in halting all cooperation with Iran on nuclear processing, particularly in light of the congressional linkages drawn to passage of the 123 agreement. The Ambassador reaffirmed the Administration's opposition to HR 1400, especially in the absence of waiver authority, and its commitment to moving ahead in concluding a 123 with Russia, but sought additional assurances from Russia that its record of halting all assistance was clean. Kislyak referred to his last meeting with acting U/S Rood and noted that the MFA had spoken to Rosatom Director Kiriyeenko, who "knew nothing" about any allegations, with a similar response from the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Russia was serious about its commitment, Kislyak stressed, and urged that more information be provided if there were any lingering questions. Russia, he repeated, had earlier "cut it off." The Ambassador pushed again on the possibility of any more recent contacts and Russian assurances that they did not constitute assistance. Kislyak responded that Russia would "triple check," with the Ambassador adding that further

assurances prior to the 2 2 meetings on October 12-13 would be welcome.

¶10. (C) Kislyak clarified that he would be available for the next P5 1 Directors meeting on October 16 or 17, but would have to leave the afternoon of October 18 for bilaterals the next day.

Arms Transfers

¶11. (S) Noting the grave and growing concern in Washington over Russia's arms transfer policies, the Ambassador delivered (reftel) demarche and non-paper, outlining Russian arms sales to Iran and Syria, and the mounting evidence of the retransfers of those weapons to non-state actors such as Hizballah and insurgents in Iraq, despite Russian end-user controls. Noting FM Lavrov's explicit encouragement on September 24 that we should elaborate our concerns, the Ambassador drew Kislyak's attention to the appearance of RPG-29's in Iraq, following their transfer to Syria in 1999-2000, and their use in at least three attacks on U.S. armored vehicles. The Ambassador stressed that this represented an unacceptable threat to U.S. and coalition forces and called for the GOR to investigate immediately the circumstances that appeared to have led to the Syrian retransfer of weapons.

¶12. (S) Kislyak questioned how the U.S. had determined the weapons were of Russian origin, given that RPGs were common throughout the former Soviet Union, and asked whether the U.S. had any identifying numbers that could be matched to the RPG's production. Kislyak said that any additional information that could be provided, including who was using the weapons against American forces, would be helpful. While he wasn't familiar with the history of the 1999-2000 transfer, Kislyak took on board the Ambassador's insistence that the Russians double-check their end use controls with Syria. Kislyak commented that the inclusion of arms transfers on the 2 2 agenda was a mistake, since the issue could best be handled by experts, but the Ambassador noted that expert level discussions had proved inconclusive and American forces were now under attack by Russian weapons.

U.S. Electoral Assistance

¶13. (C) The Ambassador flagged a recent television program on RTR that attacked the U.S. Embassy and alleged American "secret" interference in the electoral process through the funding of GOLOS, an NGO engaged in election monitoring activities. Kislyak interjected "you mean you are not?" The Ambassador replied that he had previously conveyed personally to FM Lavrov, as well as to Central Election Commissioner Churov, Kremlin Deputy Chief of Staff Surkov and Federal Security Services Director Patrushev, a standing offer for a detailed briefing on all U.S. funded activities in Russia. The U.S. was scrupulous about adhering to Russian law and the Ambassador reiterated that if Kislyak had any concerns, he should raise them directly.

Comment

¶14. (C) Kislyak appreciated the gravity of our concerns over the arms transfers and clearly recognized the new sensibilities involved with the attacks on U.S. personnel in Iraq. We appreciate any additional information that can be

MOSCOW 00004897 004 OF 004

shared with the GOR on the cited incidents, in order to push the Russians to undertake a serious investigation.
Burns